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Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 27 July 1994, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. BUTLER (Australia)

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COORDINATION QUESTIONS

(a) REPORTS OF THE COORDINATION BODIES

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QUESTION OF DECLARING 1995 INTERNATIONAL YEAR TO OBSERVE THE ONE THOUSANDTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MANAS EPIC

The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

COORDINATION OF THE POLICIES AND ACTIVITIES OF THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND OTHER BODIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM RELATED TO THE FOLLOWING THEMES (continued)

(c) IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREED CONCLUSIONS OF THE 1993 COORDINATION SEGMENT OF THE COUNCIL RELATING TO (i) THE COORDINATION OF HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE: EMERGENCY RELIEF AND THE CONTINUUM TO REHABILITATION AND DEVELOPMENT (continued) (E/1994/L.35 and L.16)

The PRESIDENT drew attention to draft decision E/1994/L.35, which was based on informal consultations held on draft decision E/1994/L.16.

Draft decision E/1994/L.35 was adopted.

Draft decision E/1994/L.16 was withdrawn.

SOCIAL, HUMANITARIAN AND HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS: REPORTS OF SUBSIDIARY BODIES, CONFERENCES AND RELATED QUESTIONS (continued)

(c) IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES BY THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH THE UNITED NATIONS (continued) (E/1994/L.36)

The PRESIDENT drew attention to draft resolution E/1994/L.36, entitled "Assistance to the Palestinian People".

Draft resolution E/1994/L.36 was adopted.

Mr. EL MOAKAF (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), speaking in explanation of position, said that his delegation had joined the consensus on the draft resolution, but did not accept the preambular paragraph endorsing the results of the Washington conference. Peace in the region could be achieved only through the establishment of an independent Palestinian State through the implementation of the relevant United Nations resolutions. The current agreement would allow Israeli expansion at the expense of the Arab people and the spread of chemical weapons and weapons of mass destruction throughout the region, in addition to continuing human rights violations.

(e) ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN (continued) (E/1994/L.30)

The PRESIDENT said that Côte d'Ivoire, Mali and Romania had joined the sponsors of draft resolution E/1994/L.30.

Draft resolution E/1994/L.30 was adopted.

(i) INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR NATURAL DISASTER REDUCTION (continued) (E/1994/L.24/Rev.1)

The PRESIDENT said that the United Kingdom and Spain had joined the sponsors of draft resolution E/1994/L.24/Rev.1.

Draft resolution E/1994/L.24/Rev.1, as revised, was adopted.

(j) CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT (continued) (E/1994/L.25)

Draft resolution E/1994/L.25 was adopted.

PERMANENT SOVEREIGNTY OVER NATIONAL RESOURCES IN THE OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN AND OTHER ARAB TERRITORIES (A/49/169-E/1994/73)

Mr. TRUMAN (Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia) said that the note by the Secretary-General on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli settlements on the Palestinian people in the Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, occupied since 1967 and on the Arab population of the Syrian Golan contained in document A/49/169-E/1994/73 had been requested in paragraph 5 of General Assembly resolution 48/212. The nature and extent of the repercussions of Israeli settlements were manifest, and he hoped that the report would assist the Council in its consideration.

Draft resolution E/1994/L.34

Mr. AWAAD (Egypt) said that the text of the draft resolution dealt with the economic and social repercussions of Israeli settlements on the Palestinian people. That item had been on the Council's agenda for some time, in line with the many General Assembly and Economic and Social Council resolutions on the matter, the most recent of which was General Assembly resolution 48/212.

COORDINATION QUESTIONS (A/49/204-E/1994/90, A/49/205-E/1994/91)

(a) REPORTS OF THE COORDINATION BODIES (A/49/16, part I, E/1994/4, E/1994/19)

(b) INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF INFORMATICS (E/1994/98)

(c) MULTISECTORAL COLLABORATION ON TOBACCO OR HEALTH (E/1994/83)

Mrs. AGGREY-ORLEANS [Chairman, Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC)] said that the report of the first part of the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) was contained in document A/49/16 (part I). Regarding the role CPC in evaluation, the programme planning cycle still governing the work programme of the United Nations had four phases. The two prospective phases of medium-term planning and biennial programming and budgeting determined what work the United Nations would carry out. They were followed by the retrospective phases of review and assessment, during which reports were presented to the General Assembly, through CPC, which permitted member States to determine whether that work had been carried out in accordance with its mandate had achieved its objectives. In the early years, CPC had restricted itself to assessing programmes in the economic and social sectors, but recently it had also requested evaluation of work in the humanitarian and political sectors. In 1993, it had conducted a comprehensive evaluation of the work of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and in 1994 it had reviewed the first half of a comprehensive evaluation of the start-up phase of peace-keeping activities.

In its discussion of the annual report of the Administrative Committee on Coordination, CPC had focused on issues relating to resource flows and financing for development in addition to the need to maintain the momentum generated by the Conference on Environment and Development. The great disparity between the losses sustained by countries invoking Article 50 of the

(Mrs. Aggrey-Orleans)

United Nations Charter and the assistance provided to them by the international community had also come to the attention of the Committee.

The Committee reaffirmed the importance of effective coordination within the United nations system, recognized that coordination should be based on substantive issues and emphasized the need for enhanced coordination at the country level. Its own role in the area of coordination constituted a principal element in its mandate. The Committee could assist the Economic and Social Council in the fulfilment of its coordinating functions by focusing attention on programming and setting priorities among issues.

Following a discussion of the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on the civilian component of peace-keeping and related missions, CPC agreed with the diagnosis of the imperfections in the staffing of that component. It stressed that further efforts should be made to enhance the security of civilian personnel participating in such operations.

In spite of considerable improvement in programme planning, monitoring and evaluation, Member States still faced difficulty in assessing the actual impact of the implementation of United Nations policy and programmes. Persistently late issuance of documentation did not help the situation, and it was the ardent hope of CPC that the Secretariat would rise to the challenge.

In conclusion, she recommended that the Council should adopt the report of CPC on the work of the first part of its thirty-fourth session and endorse the conclusions and recommendations contained therein.

Ms. THOMPSON (Director, Office of General Services), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on international cooperation in the field of informatics (E/1994/98), said that the Economic and Social Council had been seized of the issue of computer services in the United Nations since 1991. Although progress at first had been slow because the needs had to be addressed within existing resources, the goal of easy access to United Nations information systems and services was becoming a reality. An explosion of activity had occurred in the areas of CD-ROM technology and in use of the Internet, however. The Internet had the drawback that some training was required for its use and that not all Member States had access to a node.

On the coordination front, an Information Systems Coordination Committee had been formed for the purpose of identifying common standards and practices. In the future, it would be useful for that Committee to move to a biennial reporting schedule.

Mr. URANGA (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development) introduced the report of the Secretary-General on progress made in the implementation of multisectoral collaboration on tobacco or health

(Mr. Uranga)

(E/1994/83). Since the early 1970s, the resolutions of the World Health Assembly had expressed concern about the increase in tobacco-related deaths at the global level. The current death toll of 3 million was expected to rise to approximately 10 million by the year 2020. Seven million of those deaths would occur in the developing world. The World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Bank estimated that 500 million persons — representing 10 per cent of the worlds current population — would ultimately be killed by tobacco. In 30 years, premature tobacco-related deaths would surpass the estimated number of deaths from AIDS, tuberculosis and complications in childbirth.

Given the mandate of UNCTAD in the area of commodities and the need to examine the economic adjustments countries would have to make as a result of the implementation of Council resolution 1993/79 on multisectoral collaboration on tobacco or health, a focal point had been designated within the Conference to undertake the coordination and follow-up responsibilities resulting from the resolution. In the light of the recommendations formulated by the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC), the Under-Secretary-General for Policy Coordination had addressed a letter to all agencies and organizations concerned requesting them, inter alia, to elaborate individual plans work for their contributions to multisectoral collaboration on tobacco or health.

The report of the Secretary-General summarized the replies received from those international organizations and agencies as of 30 April 1994. Of the 36 United Nations agencies and programmes contacted, 20 had replied and 6 had submitted plans of work or the equivalent. The focal point had also contacted 31 intergovernmental organizations — it had received 31 replies as of 30 April 1994 — and 60 international non-governmental organizations (NGOs). All the organizations contacted had welcomed the adoption of resolution 1993/79 and expressed strong interest in cooperating with the focal point. The compilation and processing of the replies had begun in January 1994 and was still under way. All of the urgent coordination activities contemplated by the focal point had been completed or were in progress; however, it must engage in discussion with potential donors in order to obtain the necessary financing.

Following the preparation of the report, many national institutions and NGOs had submitted proposals for future action or provided input for the formulation of a multisectoral United Nations plan of action on tobacco or health. WHO, the World Bank, the International Council on Alcohol and Addictions, the American Cancer Society, the European Union, the International Commission for the Prevention of Alcoholism and Drug Dependency and the International Union Against Cancer had adopted detailed policy guidelines and

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plans of action. The plans of action promoted tax policies for discouraging tobacco consumption in Canada and the state of California, which had already proved to be extremely successful. The tax revenue was then applied to anti-tobacco educational campaigns or medical care and research. Those organizations also promoted bans on cigarette advertising; warnings on cigarette packages; anti-tobacco legislation; technical, financial and administrative action to assist tobacco farmers in diversifying their crops; health education programmes and legislation prohibiting the sale of tobacco to young persons under the age of 19.

The cross-border implications of the tobacco problem were increasingly apparent. With the expansion of trade following the successful negotiations under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), fiscal measures taken by North American and European countries to reduce consumption had been hampered by cross-border tobacco advertisements. It was hoped that cross-border advertising would ultimately play a positive role in the anti-tobacco campaign.

Mr. KUDRYAVTSEV (Russian Federation) expressed concern about the continuing delays in the preparation of documentation for the sessions of the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC). His delegation believed that CPC should continue to meet twice a year; it should consider programme questions before the session of the Economic and Social Council and budgetary questions before the session of the General Assembly. Closer linkages must be established between the discussions which took place in CPC and the deliberations of the Council. For example, the programme aspects of topics for discussion during the coordination segment of the Council might be considered during the first part of the CPC sessions. Closer linkages must also be established between the coordination functions of the Council and CPC.

Referring to the question of international cooperation in the field of informatics, he said that the activities of the Advisory Committee for the Coordination of Information Systems (ACCIS) had been useful. The decision to discontinue that Committee without first consulting Member States contravened Council resolution 1992/60. It impeded coordination in the field of informatics and access to the United Nations information system.

His delegation was concerned that the report of the Secretary-General on international cooperation in the field of informatics (E/1994/98) made no mention of the principal end-users of the United Nations information system, namely the Member States. His delegation would appreciate clarification concerning the channels through which the Secretariat would provide information to Member States, and on whether the discontinuation of ACCIS would reduce the volume of information provided. It would also be useful to

(Mr. Kudryavtsev, Russian Federation)

know how the resources which had been earmarked for the Advisory Committee would be reallocated.

Ms. BOHN (United States of America) announced that Australia, Canada, Eritrea, Estonia, Japan, Pakistan, the Russian Federation, Senegal and the United States of America would be introducing a draft resolution under the agenda item entitled "Coordination questions: multisectoral collaboration on tobacco or health".

Mr. KHAN (Pakistan) noted that the report of the Secretary-General on international cooperation in the field of informatics (E/1994/98) said very little about consultation with permanent missions, probably because it had not occurred. He wished to know why the Secretariat had been unable to establish a consultation process when it had been requested to do so in three Council resolutions. He requested more information on the location and staffing of the central focal point for all services requested by permanent missions to the United Nations. The permanent missions in Geneva did not seem to be aware of the existence of such a focal point. He wondered why they had not been notified. Referring to paragraph 18 of the report, he asked about the reasons for the delay in installing an Internet Gopher programme in the Office of General Services. He noted that the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) had installed a bopher programme the year before with no problem. Access by permanent missions to the Internet in New York was fairly limited as it was dependent on an electronic mail (e-mail) facility. He wondered why it was not possible to establish an Internet system to which permanent missions would have direct access. ITU had had no problem in that regard.

In general, the time-frames indicated in the report were "as soon as possible" or "in the process of"; it was not clear why, after three years, time-frames could not be specified. Paragraph 31 on the availability of Internet in developing countries was merely a restatement of the obvious. It would be fare more relevant to indicate what action the United Nations planned to take in order to improve access by developing countries, either through the Secretariat or the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The cursory treatment of the United Nations Optical Disk System in paragraph 37 was surprising. The Secretariat should have provided information on its plans for upgrading the Optical Disk System in order to make it accessible to all Member States in the near future. The content of paragraph 49 was a recycling of the information already contained in the relevant resolutions.

Mr. MARTYNENKO (Ukraine) stressed the importance of informatics to transition countries like Ukraine, which could use the latest information technology to address economic and social problems. International assistance

(Mr. Martynenko, Ukraine)

to transition countries should focus, first and foremost, on the development of new information technology.

Mr. COSTA (Brazil) stressed that Council resolution 1993/79 on multisectoral collaboration on tobacco or health highlighted the role of country-level plans in controlling tobacco consumption and the importance of mitigating the socio-economic impact of a reduction in the demand for tobacco on producer countries. His delegation fully supported the approach outlined in the resolution.

Thus for, the resolution had produced mixed results. On the one hand, a focal point for the United Nations system had been established promptly and plans had been submitted by the Food and Agriculture organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the World Health Organization (WHO). On the other hand, the various organizations had not yet collaborated to any great extent. The dearth of available resources, particularly for activities aimed at addressing the socio-economic impact of reduced tobacco demand, was also regrettable. Most distressing of all was the shift of emphasis from the national comprehensive strategies advanced in resolution 1993/79 to the comprehensive international strategies described in paragraph 84 of the report.

His delegation welcomed the fact that FAO, UnCTAD and UNIDO were prepared to help Member States deal with the socio-economic impact of demand reduction. A decrease in demand could lead to poverty and malnutrition among populations which were dependent on tobacco production. As FAO had pointed out, that was ultimately a greater health risk than tobacco use itself. His delegation hoped that FAO, UNCTAD and UNIDO would collaborate further in that area, in accordance with paragraph 6 of Council resolution 1993/79. Such concerted action would provide a sound basis for the elaboration of national comprehensive multisectoral plans in producer countries. His delegation trusted that the necessary extrabudgetary resources would be made available in that connection.

The PRESIDENT said he would take it that the Council wished to take note of the report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination on the first part of its thirty-fourth session [A/49/16 (Part I)], the report of the twenty-seventh series of Joint Meetings of the Committee for Programme and Coordination and the Administrative Committee on Coordination held on 27 October 1993 (E/1994/4) and the annual overview report of the Administrative Committee on Coordination for 1993 (E/1994/19).

It was so decided.

PROGRAMME AND RELATED QUESTIONS IN THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND RELATED FIELDS

Mr. BUNCH (Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development) introduced the report of the Secretary-General on modalities of reporting in the economic, social and related fields (E/1994/88). The report had been submitted in compliance with General Assembly resolution 48/162 on restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields. The report outlined the problem with regard to documentation from the perspective of the Secretary-General and the Secretariat. It contained a summary of past action and, in paragraph 20, recommended a number of measures to the Council which could be applied flexibly. There was nothing extremely innovative or radical about those measures but he believed that they represented a step in the right direction.

Mr. DUGAN (United States of America) welcomed the specific action taken by the Secretariat in response to General Assembly resolution 48/162. It was his delegation's understanding, too, that the measures proposed in the report were guidelines and did not have to be applied rigidly. His delegation would welcome action by the Council at the earliest possible date, particularly in view of the remarks made by the Chairman of CPC on the problems caused by delays in the preparation of documentation.

Mr. DOUJAK (Observers for Austria) welcomed the report's succinctness and the action-oriented recommendations it contained. Referring to General Assembly resolution 48/162, he stressed the need to provide adequate information to Member States while controlling the number of reports. His delegation therefore supported a flexible approach to the control and limitation of documentation. It also welcomed the suggestion on consolidated reports and, in particular, on identifying areas where joint reports could be submitted to intergovernmental bodies. His delegation and others would be introducing a draft resolution relating to the recommendations formulated by the Secretariat, on which it would welcome input from other delegations.

Mr. RAMOUL (Observer for Algeria), speaking on behalf of the States members of the Group of 77, commended the Secretariat for the brevity and quality of document E/1994/88. While his delegation could accept some of the recommendations contained in that report, it had reservations regarding others, in particular, the suggestion that oral rather than written reports should be mandated. It was important to have a record of certain discussions.

QUESTION OF DECLARING 1998 INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE OCEAN (E/1994/17; E/1994/L.39)

Mr. WERTHEIN (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) described the reasons underlying the adoption by the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) of its resolution 2.5, contained in the annex to

(Mr. Werthein)

document E/1994/17, calling for the proclamation of 1998 as international year of the ocean. The integral management of coastal and ocean spaces and of the multiple uses and resources of the marine environment depended on access to information, enhanced public education and scientific awareness, as had been emphasized in the Rio Declaration and Agenda 21. International cooperation on ocean management also was important in the context of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. The participation of scientists, managers and national policy- and decision-makers was essential to ensure that the activities undertaken in 1998 would have a long-term positive impact.

A written statement by UNESCO containing details of its plans relating to the international year of the ocean was available to delegations in the meeting room.

Ms. MENDES (Portugal), introducing draft resolution E/1994/L.39, announced that the following delegations had joined the list of sponsors: Angola, Australia, Bangladesh, Egypt, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Pakistan, the Russian Federation and Sri Lanka.

It was imperative to ensure the more effective management of ocean resources with a view to attaining sustainable development, in particular within the framework of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. The declaration of 1998 as international year of the ocean would foster greater understanding of the influence of the marine environment and demographic growth in coastal areas on the world ecosystem.

Her country was linked to the sea by geography and history and planned to host an international exposition in Lisbon in 1998 on "The Oceans, a Heritage for the Future".

She urged the unanimous adoption of the draft resolution contained in document E/1994/L.39.

Mr. YE Dabo (China) said that his delegation supported the draft resolution under consideration. Declaring 1988 international year of the ocean would enhance the importance of the oceans worldwide, encourage increased investment in ocean-related activities and facilitate the exchange among States of information relevant issues. His country took ocean-related concerns into account in its national policies and plans.

QUESTION OF DECLARING 1995 INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE ONE THOUSANDTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MANAS EPIC (E/1994/18; E/1994/L.31)

Mr. ATABEKOV (Observer for Kyrgyzstan), speaking in accordance with rule 72 of the rules of procedure of the Economic and Social Council, introduced draft resolution E/1994/L.31 on an international year for the millennium of the Kyrgyz national epic Manas and announced that Bhutan and Costa Rica had joined the list of sponsors. He pointed out draft the

(Mr. Atabekov)

introductory words to the preamble, "The Economic and Social Council", should be replaced by the words "The General Assembly".

He emphasized that the central theme of the Kyrgyz national epic Manas was the fundamental unity, brotherhood and harmonious coexistence of all mankind, and it thus mirrored the ultimate purposes and objectives of the United Nations. The declaration of 1995 as international year to observe the one thousandth anniversary of the Manas epic would underscore the ideals of the United Nations. His delegation was grateful that UNESCO would assume the role of lead organization for the international year and looked forward to practical undertakings on its part. He hoped that the draft resolution, which had no financial implications, would be adopted by consensus.

Mr. SUTOYO (Indonesia) said that his country also had abundant national and local epics and recognized that an epic could serve as a basic reference regarding the literature, language and cultural and religious traditions of a people. Although his delegation appreciated the effort to draw the international community's attention to the epic in order to further understanding of certain ideals and values, it nevertheless had reservations regarding the submission and substance of the draft resolution.

Mr. KARSLIOGLU (Observer for Turkey), welcoming the introduction of the draft resolution, said that the Manas epic was a unique work of literature and history and advocated ideals that should be shared and understood by the international community.

Mr. WERTHEIN (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) said that the celebration of the millennium of the Kyrgyz national epic Manas was one of the anniversaries with which UNESCO would be associated during 1994-1995. UNESCO planned a symposium on Manas in July 1995 whose participants would include scholars from various regions of the world.

Mr. GULEY (Ukraine) said that his delegation supported draft resolution E/1994/L.31.

OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF THE UNTIED NATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION (continued) (E/1994/L.27 and L.40)

The PRESIDENT said that draft resolution E/1994/L.27 on the operational activities segment of the Economic and Social Council and draft decision E/1994/L.40 on the high-level meeting of the 1995 operational activities segment of the Council had both been the subject of broad consultations and agreement.

Mr. RAMOUL (Observer for Algeria) pointed out that it had been agreed in the consultations that paragraph 8 (e) of document E/1994/L.27 should become paragraph 8 (b) and that the remaining subparagraphs should be renumbered accordingly.

Mr. DUGAN (United States of America) said, with reference to document E/1994/L.40, that, to the best of his recollection, it was the Council's practice to decide at its organizational session which principal theme would be considered at the high-level segment of the substantive session later that year.

The PRESIDENT pointed out that the Council was breaking new ground with the operational activities segment and that it did not have to be bound in that context by the practice referred to by the United States representative.

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.